

Pastoral Update #3

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Date: 03 April 2020

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[0 : 0 0] Hello, this is the third of our Pastoral Update videos. It's Friday, the third of April, and each week we want to just take an opportunity to share with you and encourage you as we work through this really strange and difficult time together. Both Derek and I just want to say how thankful we are for all that you are doing. It's been absolutely amazing to see all the different ways in which you've supported and encouraged one another. We're so encouraged as to how people have been keeping in touch and all the different ways in which people have been connecting and encouraging has been brilliant. And above all that, we're both so conscious of your prayerful support as well. In many ways, it's hard to believe all that's happened over the past couple of weeks. But one thing that's been so clear is that God has been upholding us all and helping us, and we're so grateful for the support that you give us through your prayers. As usual, we are trying to just keep things in many ways as normal as possible, remembering the fact that at the heart of our lives is worshipping together at the beginning of every new week on a Sunday. So we look forward to welcoming you to our live stream on Sunday morning. Again, it'll be at 11 o'clock and at half past five. I'll be preaching in the morning, and Derek will be preaching in the evening. Just a couple of things to note for the morning service. During the service, we're going to have a spotlight about the work of the Charity Safe Families. It's a charity based here in Edinburgh that works to provide support for vulnerable families and children.

They'll be taking an offering to support their work, and payment will be made online through Stripe. So if you're able to make a donation with your credit or debit card, that money will come to us at St Columbus, and we'll then distribute it to Safe Families, just as we would with a collection that we would take here at church. Also, just to note that in a half hour before the service, from half past 10 until 11, there will be just some information slides playing on the live feed. So feel free to tune in early, and it's a chance just to catch up with some of the other pieces of news that are taking place. We had City Groups earlier this week, and we were really encouraged at the ways in which City Groups are connecting online. That means next week it'll be Engine Room on Wednesday evening, and we really look forward to John Watson speaking and opening God's Word up for us as we gather together, just to study God's Word and to pray. So if you're able to join us for Engine Room next

Wednesday, that would be absolutely brilliant. Last thing I want to say is just I want to share a couple of my favourite verses at the very end of Romans chapter 8, verses 38 and 39, which I'm sure are really familiar verses, but they're just so brilliant and encouraging at a time like this where Paul writes, but I'm sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord. And I was really especially struck by just the phrase, things present, nor things to come. The present circumstances are ones that we never expected, and in many ways it makes us even more apprehensive about what might come, not just to do with the coronavirus, but just to do with life in general. We've kind of been really reminded powerfully that we don't know what a day, or a week, or a month, or a year might bring.

Just the things that are present and the things that are to come can cause us to worry and be afraid. But these verses are an amazing reminder that there's absolutely nothing in what's present and absolutely nothing in what's to come that can separate you from God's love for you in Jesus Christ. And these are amazing words for us to hold on to.

Thanks.